(c) The samples of food can be tested for analysis of antioxidants, preservatives and microbiological tests within 14 days but in some cases microbiological tests may take some more time.

Anthrax prevention measures

199. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether people are dying due to anthrax in every State especially in the agency areas like East Godavari, West Godavari, Visakhapatnam and Khammam rural areas in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the funds being released and spent for this purpose; and

(e) what steps Government will take to prevent it early by taking precautions and creating awareness among the people in rural agency areas?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No. In Andhra Pradesh human anthrax cases are reported only from Visakhapatnam District.

(b) and (c) 18 confirmed human anthrax cases with 3 deaths among 75 suspected anthrax cases have been reported from Visakhapatnam District which is due to handling and consumption of deceased animals.

(d) As informed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, no funds have been released for this purpose. However, the funds required to tackle this disease are being arranged by them from the regular budgetary allocations. For supplementing State Government's efforts in controlling animal diseases (including anthrax), funds are also being provided by Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries to states under centrally sponsored scheme 'Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD)'.

(e) The State Government has informed that their Health Department, in coordination with Animal Husbandry, Panchayath Raj and Revenue Departments, is taking all possible preventive and control measures and creating awareness among the people in rural agency areas.

Opening of equipped hospitals in rural areas

200. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are only 34 per cent hospitals which can find diseases at an early stage by doing medical check-ups in rural areas;

(b) if so, the reasons for such low percentage in rural areas; and

(c) the number of such hospitals to be constructed in the current year, State-wise, especially in Andhra Pradesh?